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JUN 27 1994

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

June 27, 1994

By Hand

Mr. William F. Caton
Acting Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 222
Washington, DC 20554

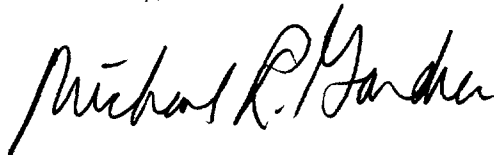
RE: MM Docket No. 93-48
En Banc Hearing on Children's Television

Dear Mr. Caton:

Enclosed for inclusion in the above docket is the slightly revised testimony of Bruce Johansen, President and COO of NATPE International. On June 15, we submitted the original draft testimony in this proceeding. The enclosed text, however, reflects some revisions to that testimony as well as reference to a VHS videotape that we will use during Mr. Johansen's presentation tomorrow on Panel No. 2. Should you wish to have a copy of the VHS tape for the record, we will be pleased to provide you one following Mr. Johansen's testimony.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Gardner
Counsel for NATPE

MRG:ra

Enclosure

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Bruce Johansen's Remarks at the FCC En Banc Hearing on Children's Television (June 28, 1994)

Chairman Hundt, Commissioner Quello, Commissioner Barrett, Commissioner Ness and Commissioner Chong: My name is Bruce Johansen and I am President and COO of the National Association of Television Program Executives. Thank you for affording me, and through me, NATPE's 2,100 corporate members and the thousands of others from our industry who participate each year in NATPE's Conference and ongoing events, the opportunity to speak with you today about the important issue of Children's Television.

NATPE's diverse members are highly sensitive to what affects children in our society. In fact, the industries we represent—television programmers, broadcasters, cablecasters, independent producers, the studios and syndicators—have, over the years since television began, been creative and tenacious champions of television for young viewers and their families. Historical shows such as Captain Kangaroo, Ozzie and Harriet, Romper Room, Cosby, Mr. Rogers, My Three Sons, Family Ties and Sesame Street—and countless others, whether directed exclusively at children or children as part of the larger family viewing audience, have been important in helping to enrich young viewers and, ultimately, society as a whole.

Importantly, I respectfully urge you and your fellow decision-makers in Congress to take careful note of the fact that this programming grew out of a largely flexible, enlightened regulatory environment where stifling content and quantitative regulation were not acceptable intrusions into the rich and diverse creative process that has made our industry the envy of the world. In fact, when you hopefully join us at NATPE's 1995 Convention next January in Las Vegas, you'll see first-hand the more than 13,000 exhibitors and buyers of programming from every corner of our globe who will aggressively participate in NATPE's once-a-year software marketplace offering a diverse array of video programming for children as well as general audiences.

Because of NATPE's leadership role in the promotion of software—software that will ultimately program the domestic and global Information Superhighway, we at NATPE have been keenly aware of the importance of our membership's potential collective contribution through television, cable and satellite programming to the well-being of our society. We are particularly mindful of the role that programming can play with the vast audience of young viewers whose values and goals can be influenced by this pervasive medium of entertainment and news programming in our high-tech society.

Many of the women and men who are our industry leaders care mightily about social issues, whether it be the environment, the plight of the homeless and the hungry, AIDS victims—these are all terribly troubling issues that have been ventilated for the public by the software that NATPE's members have produced—even when the subject was painful or unpopular. And if you look beyond television programming at the fundraising appeals and neighborhood efforts to address these issues, you see our industry leaders at the forefront of each fight. Ours is a caring and concerned creative community.

Thus, I come before you today with a message similar to what I stated at our Convention in Miami this year when we announced NATPE's five-point initiative on Children and Violence. In recognizing that we have tremendous challenges and terrible problems in our society today, the answer is not to indict television. Television is simply not the root cause of all evil

in our society and to blame it, and, at the same time, expect it to solve all of society's problems is to deny reality. Moreover, to burden our rich creative process with straitjacketed regulations will surely inhibit an industry that can be an important tool in the rejuvenation of our troubled society, particularly among young viewers.

Now, let's talk about some concrete things that our industry can do, and is doing, to use our exciting medium to affirmatively influence young viewers. Several years ago, NATPE's Board of Directors was troubled by the increased incidents of bigotry in our society, and designed and implemented a public service campaign that has since won countless awards. Particularly important in that effort was a series of animated public service spots for young viewers which continues to air prominently around the country during weekend children's viewing time and during dayparts when young viewers are most likely to be before the television set.

Just last week, NATPE's Educational Foundation, which was established in 1978, sponsored a Teleconferencing Workshop to address ways to reduce violence on television. Our June 21st Teleworkshop, like other NATPE Educational workshops and training efforts that take place regularly throughout the year, was broadcast via satellite to NATPE member stations and other non-member stations around the country. Broadcasters participating in this teleworkshop discussed how they are voluntarily limiting the use of news footage of violent scenes during late afternoon and early evening local news shows in order to diminish the opportunity for young viewers to see gross scenes of violence in their community. There is great sensitivity in our industry to adhere to current FCC guidelines, beyond minimum requirements. For example, I'd like you to hear now the comments of Ron Miller, Station Manager, WBTV, Charlotte, North Carolina made during last week's Teleworkshop. **[Video, 00:00:41]**

Other ideas were shared among the NATPE panelists, which included Oscar and Emmy Award-winning producer Arnold Shapiro, researchers and viewers who discussed ways to better address societal concerns through self-initiated, responsible actions designed to impact the most vulnerable segment of our society—children. I'd like to share with you now Mr. Shapiro's comments underscoring an often-overlooked element in this discussion. **[Video, 00:00:31]**

NATPE has also been working with Children Now, Media Scope and other concerned groups in order to become better informed about the substantial research and insight these organizations have developed on children in our stressful society.

We are also conducting a survey in conjunction with professional consultants from the University of California at Santa Barbara to directly poll youngsters from the ages of 8 through 14 as to what they think are the sources of violence in their lives and, simultaneously, ascertain what television programs children are watching and why they watch what they do. As part of our five-point initiative, NATPE will also hold townhall meetings during 1994 in several cities, where children and young people, rather than adults, will discuss their views on violence and identify the elements of society which have the most impact on their lives. NATPE member stations in the host cities will be part of the organizational planning and encouraged to communicate the proceedings of the townhall meetings through news programming and marketing to the publics they serve. We feel

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strongly that the nation's children and young people have been the unheard voices in the continuing debate over the roots of violence in society. And while politicians, educators, well-intended activists and the media have been prolific in their pronouncements of this issue, little attention has been paid to the thoughts of the very people who are the subject of this ongoing discussion.

I have heard more than one well-meaning individual state that there have been virtually no innovative and educational programs developed for children since The Children's Television Act was introduced. This is simply not true. I have before me an impressive list of programs in syndication designed specifically with educational and pro-social messages as their key, underlining objectives. These programs were created and produced by responsible people in our industry who have realized that the only way to achieve the educational objectives we all desire is by utilizing entertaining and dramatic devices. As Mr. Werner, representing Walt Disney Television, mentioned earlier, the programs must work creatively. They must be compelling and engaging. Otherwise the message will simply not be seen nor heard.

Local broadcasters have understood this for years. They have been at the forefront of developing outstanding programming for young people—programming that is at once informative, educational and entertaining. And you will hear today about award-winning children's programming successes produced by companies such as Warner's, Hearst, Lin, Westinghouse, Rysher, Turner, PBS, CPB, Columbia and Disney—not to mention ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox.

The aforementioned examples of self-initiated activity by NATPE's members are but a few of the endeavors ongoing within our industry to provide more programming and information that is constructive as well as entertaining for young viewers. We think that it is misguided at this time to add more regulations. Rather, we urge the Commission to serve as a catalyst to further energize the vast melting pot of rich cultural and ethnic diversity that is driving the creative process in the United States. Instead of over-regulating broadcasters and programmers with content and quantitative regulations, let's advance our society's goals through improved education and motivation for young viewers by working within the current regulatory framework to promote more innovative, self-initiated actions by the entire entertainment industry.

I would like to respectfully request the Commission to consider two proposals: First, the Commission might issue once-a-year commendations for outstanding efforts in the Children's Television arena; this would afford you an opportunity to recognize creative efforts and inspire more quality children's television and encourage even greater innovation. Second, I urge the Commission to consider convening semi-annual meetings where producers, broadcasters, cable casters, educators and advocacy groups, just to cite a few, could come together for an ongoing discussion, with Commission involvement, on the evolving nature of Children's Television. NATPE would be proud to assist in organizing both of the above suggestions.

I welcome any questions and, again, I appreciate the opportunity to share with you NATPE's members' experiences in helping our young viewers to be their best young selves.